



BUREAU OF AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR

Advisory Group Meeting

July 11, 2005



MEETING MINUTES

♦ Advisory Group Members in Attendance:

Lou Anapolsky
Paul Frech
Shelly Levy

Jim Custeau
George Hritz
Peter Welch

Dennis DeCota
Marty Keller

♦ BAR Staff in Attendance:

Richard Ross
Bob Machado
Rich Mundy
Debbie Romani

James Goldstene
Rick McClarty
Sue Rosenblatt

Mike Vanderlaan
Wayne Ramos
Rick Fong

♦ Welcoming Remarks:

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 A.M. Introductions were made of all the Advisory Group members (Advisory Members).

Chief Ross said the assistance and support he has received from the Advisory Members has been great. He encourages 'open' communication like this and will continue his industry meetings.

♦ Chief's General Update:

BAR has been working on IT projects. The BAR Website is being redesigned to be more 'user' friendly for consumers as well as industry.

The Department of Consumer Affairs' (DCA) Communication Division is working with BAR to get the Repair Reporter and Smog Check Advisory published on a regular schedule.

♦ Agenda Item: Responses to Questions from Prior Meeting

Rich Mundy – The centralized complaint program is alive and well and being operated by the Department's Complaint Mediation Program coordinator. Rick is pulling together a semi-annual report that will be sent out to centralized complaint program participants that will show confirmed complaint violations. Midas wants to be able to review complaint data and office conferences.

Can a vehicle go from the Vehicle Repair Program to the Vehicle Retirement Program? A vehicle can go from one program to the other; however BAR will handle them on a case-by-case basis. CAP will study this issue further.

CAP retired 4,932 vehicles in FY 2004/05.

◆ **Agenda Item: Advisory Notice Update**

The Advisory Notice Pilot Program Report is being sent for review by the Governor's Office before its release to the public.

◆ **Agenda Item: Ombudsman Update**

The Ombudsman received about 50 calls during April, May and June. Most of the calls were inquiries regarding the vehicle retirement program; a few were Test-Only referrals. The Ombudsman invites calls from the Advisory Members, with any questions they might have. The DCA Website has information about the Ombudsman and how to contact him, including his phone number. Chief Ross said he will write an Email letter to each Advisory Member with information regarding the Ombudsman, so they can place this information in their business newsletters and/or emails.

◆ **Agenda Item: Legislation/Regulation Update**

AB 226 (Bermudez) – Automotive Technology Education.

Would create the Automotive Career and Technical Education Account within the VIRF. Would require BAR to deposit 10% of the VIRF operating reserves into the ACTEA annually.

AB 383 (Montanez) – Would raise the qualifying income level from 185% to 225% of the federal poverty level for CAP repair assistance.

AB 386 (Lieber) – Would require ARB, in consultation with DCA, to develop, and revise as necessary, program goals, program design and program funding to implement the Smog Check program.

Public commented that there seems to be a lack of communication on where this bill is going. Advisory member asked, "How would AB 386 impact BAR?"

AB 578 (Horton) – Would require the department to adopt regulations, on or before June 1, 2006, to implement, by January 1, 2007, a program permitting the initial testing of test-only directed vehicles at gold shield stations, as specified. Would require that, on and after January 1, 2007, any gold shield station or specified test-only station that does not maintain high levels of performance be put under a 6-month probationary period. Would specify that if the station does not improve its performance level to the satisfaction of the department within the probationary period, the station (gold shield or test-only) would lose the privilege of providing initial emissions testing to specified vehicles for a minimum of one year.

Chief Ross stated that any Advisory Members that have bills of interest, please let BAR know.

Several comments were made during the discussion, raising several issues including the fact that we may begin to see less qualified teachers. The public commented that associations like the California Teachers Association are working on three new bills.

- Industry is about 43,000 technicians short right now and will get worse with the retiring industry.
- High school counselors persuade students into a 4-year degree, however they don't suggest a vocational trade.

- Private industry is coming in to “bridge the gap”, where community colleges and high schools are slowing down in teaching automotive mechanics. Technicians need to be taught the “business aspect” of the field, or else they won’t succeed as a shop owner; down the road, most technicians eventually become shop owners.
- Technicians need to have a good business sense of what is involved.

♦ **Break: 11:00 A.M. to 11:20 A.M.**

♦ **Agenda Item: Enforcement Monitor Update**

Mr. David Howe, the Enforcement Monitor for BAR, has been riding along with BAR field representatives doing inspections, attending office conferences in the field, visiting the Ombudsman’s office, and attending mediation meetings. He should have a preliminary report completed in August.

A person in the audience asked for the name and telephone number of the Enforcement Monitor. David Howe can be reached at (425) 427-5269.

♦ **Agenda Item: Breathe Easier Campaign**

The main idea behind the new campaign is to link air quality, vehicle pollution and health. BAR has public service announcements (PSAs) on TV/radio presently. DMV’s vehicle registration renewal envelope now has the Breathe Easier message on it. An Advisory Member said that maybe BAR should contact tax preparers, to advise them of the CAP program and the fact that if they have a broken car, it can not be written off on their taxes, however if they donate it, then it can be.

♦ **Agenda Item: Smog Check Repair Durability**

There was a discussion about Smog Check repair durability. Keeping older cars cleaner longer is the goal. Chief Ross would like to develop more data like value, quality, how long it lasts, etc. When doing pullovers, BAR’s Roadside Unit has discovered that repairs usually don’t last a full two years between smogs. USEPA Region 3 is doing a Smog Check repair durability study. BAR is proactively identifying areas of needed improvement by identifying shops that are doing good/bad work. BAR has gone into the field and talked to some shop owners and technicians that have actually experienced running a car through a smog nine times at the cost of \$450. BAR found out it was due to the technician not having done this type of work before, so he wasn’t fully trained and experienced. The question was asked if there are any statistics to indicate what effectiveness the test and repair licensed technicians have had on repairs. Mr. Mundy said BAR may not have that data, but he will look. Advisory member asked if it would help in obtaining this information if the repair station indicated the station number and technician license number on the work order? Mr. Vanderlaan said BAR would encourage this.

The Advisory Committee asked if it would help to survey the consumers, to track who does repairs. Chief will have George Adelsperger look at the overall process of A vs. B grade shops. Mr. Vanderlaan explained that his staff is currently evaluating VID and roadsides data in order to more effectively answer questions relating to repair durability and emission reductions.

The Advisory Committee asked if “borderline Smog Check passes” should be referred to CAP? Mr. Vanderlaan said the current policy is “if it passes, it can’t qualify for CAP”. Advisory Member said this should be looked at; it is frustrating to pass a vehicle that you know needs more repairs.

An audience member said that at the May 17th IMRC meeting, the issue of “marginal cars” came up; this issue is getting worse and needs to be looked at. We need to fix what needs to be repaired, not just what it takes to get the vehicle passed.

Mr. Vanderlaan said BAR is just now completing an OBD II study where this issue is addressed.

The question was asked “Will information be included in update training?” Mr. Vanderlaan said yes.

Mr. Mundy said Standards and Training staff is looking at BAR’s technician licensing process to explore possible improvements and consolidation of pre-requisites.

An Advisory Member asked what should industry be looking at in the future, as far as cost of equipment – what should we be saving our dollars for? Mr. Vanderlaan said BAR is looking at other program options such as those relating to OBD.

♦ **Agenda Items Raised for Future Meetings:**

- ✓ David Howe will be attending committee meetings in the future.
- ✓ Maintenance Standards. (Lou A.)
- ✓ Enforcement Monitor to discuss findings. (James G.)
- ✓ Regulations narrowed regarding Test Only sites? (Paul F.)
- ✓ Test Only co-locations.
- ✓ Internal discussion to further define existing regulations. (Dick R.)
- ✓ Liaison to work with legislators regarding Test-Only USEPA mandate. Request that legislators be properly informed. (Dennis D.)
- ✓ Fact sheet on Test-Only.

♦ **Meeting Adjourned 12:25 PM**

♦ **Next Meeting Date:** October 17, 2005